

Wellesley Council on Aging Board Meeting
October 20, 2014

Attending: Voting Members: John Schuler, Shirley Quinn, Mary Dummer, Susan Kagan Lange, Sister Alice McCourt, William Murphy, Sheila Nugent, Joellen Toussaint
Associate Members: Mary Bowers, Jean Boyle, Diane Campbell, Lisa Heyison, Judith Keefe, Jerry Kelley, Joanne Kilsdonk, Penelope Lawrence, Dianne Sullivan, Frederick Wright, Gayle Thieme, Director of Senior Services
Absent: Sandy Budson, Linda Cohen, John Cross, Diane Lapon, Miguel Lessing

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in Henderson Hall of the Wellesley Community Center.

Citizen Speak: Mary Bowers reported on the pleasant COA trip to Ogunquit taken by eleven COA members using the new COA bus.

Minutes of September 15, 2014 meeting were approved with a motion by Bill Murphy and seconded by Joanne Kilsdonk .

Tolles Parsons Updates by Fred Wright. Fred is the liaison from the COA Board to the permanent Building Committee which is managing the development of the Tolles Parsons Center. Fred explained that he served on the Planning Committee during the summer of 2013 along with Gayle Thieme, John Schuler, Susan Lange, Harriet Warshaw, Ellen Gibbs, and Terri Tsagaris (Selectmen) which created a program specification for a new senior center to be sited at 496 Washington Street. An advisory group to support the work of the Planning Group was also formed in summer 2013; Jean Boyle was a member of that group. These groups produced a comprehensive program description designed to meet current and future needs of Wellesley seniors in their own center . In addition to creating program and space requirements to accommodate those programs, the work of these committees included much research on healthy aging and visits to approximately eight centers. The program specification was turned by the architect into a three-story, approximately 14,000 sq.ft. building design with parking on site and across Washington Street at an expanded Police Station lot. As a first step, this project was submitted to the Planning Committee for PSI (Project of Significant Impact) approval (to include water sewer drainage, electric, fire protection, and traffic and pedestrian safety). The project was rejected. With the subsequent purchase of the lot next door, 494 Washington Street, the process was restarted. To be reconsidered the Planning Board requires “specific material changes” in a new PSI submission. In our opinion we have now met the requirements of the Planning Board and the Town Bylaws. Once the Planning Board has passed the plan, it goes to public hearings. It then goes to the Advisory Committee, made up of opinion makers and leaders of the town to “get the word out”. The architect wants to move ahead as soon as possible as building costs are rising.

The Permanent Building Committee decided to hire a new firm of architects , Catlin and Petrov. who have taken the same set of program specifications created by the Planning and Advisory Groups and changed the original plans to an approximately 13,000 sq.ft.

on two floors from 14,000 sq.ft. on three floors. All parking will be on site with place for 58-61 cars, 5 handicap slots, and 1 van. The architect provided capacity per room and space in the new design and Gayle and Fred subsequently created a pro forma schedule using current and future COA programs and found the new design accommodates our needs. The new design includes two larger multipurpose spaces, a café, a library/lounge with fireplace, four activity rooms, a game space (with plans for billiard tables and card tables), fitness/exercise space and dance/exercise space, and an outdoor patio and bocce court. The Planning Board has no power over the interior of the building. At the moment there is no dedicated space except for the craft room which requires a sink. It is hoped to have an all purpose room containing a billiard table. The size of rooms will be governed by their use. Terri and the architect will give a presentation to the COA board and take questions. In answer to a question about the use of the building, Fred replied that the number of people in the building at any given time can be managed by careful scheduling and management of programs. The new plan is now considered a better plan than the original.

John Schuler made the point that Wellesley COA is unique with its well developed transportation program that will cut down on the use of private cars for COA activities. With reference to the lack of basement, it was noted that it has not affected the square footage devoted to programming. The mechanical needs of the building will be located in the attic. Cutting out the basement means a substantial reduction in costs and will do away with potential problems of drainage. Everyone concerned agrees that the new plan will satisfy the needs of the COA. However, there will be time constraints and financial issues raised about other capital projects facing the Town such as renovations to the schools, the North 40, and 900 Worcester Street. It is hoped that this plan will be approved by the Planning Board and go to Town Meeting in the spring with construction starting next August or September

Handouts dealing consisting of a depiction of the Tolles-Parsons Center, the plot plan and the building plan, and the construction project approval procedure are on file at the WCOA.

Long Range Strategic Planning Committee Update – Susan Kagan Lange

Susan started by thanking the members of the Committee for their contributions and hard work. The Committee consisted of Gayle Thieme, with her vast expertise in the work of COAs and the aging network generally; Tom Kealy, with his corporate background in finance, human resources, and other matters; Sheryl Goodridge, with her medical background as a physical therapist and kinesio taping instructor who has worked at the Harvard University infirmary and has taught for many years all over the world; John Schuler, ex officio member of the Committee, who served as an innovator in education in one chapter of his life and, among many other things, has been the ultimate civic leader for many years in Wellesley; and herself, with her background as a corporate lawyer and legal and strategic planning advisor. Susan also expressed gratitude to Bill Murphy, former director of building and grounds at Harvard University and former member of the Committee, whose insightful comments over several months very much helped shape the

Committee's final product. The Committee also met with staff, board members, police, fire department, and other Town offices, and conducted focus groups with COA representatives and leaders from other organizations from other towns. They looked particularly at items that would be required by the National Institute of Senior Centers (NISC) in case Wellesley COA applies for accreditation.

Susan noted that the Board would be receiving two Long Range Strategic Planning documents, and that the Board is invited to a "conversation meeting" on Friday, October 31, 1:30-2:30 PM in the Garden Room of the Wellesley Community Center to discuss the documents (with a rain date of Friday, November 14, 1:30-2:30 PM). The first document, entitled *Long Range Strategic Plan*, is a shorter document suitable for distribution to the wider community as well as to the Board and Staff. The second document, entitled *Comprehensive Guide to Long Range Strategic Plan*, is a longer, more detailed document, including overall goals, action steps, deadlines, and leadership suggestions. Although both documents are public documents, Susan said that the first document would likely be most useful as an education and public relations tool about what the COA is and where it is going in the next five to ten years; and the second document, given its high level of detail, would likely be most useful to the Board and Staff as they take steps to move the COA forward. The Committee envisions that priorities will be set by the Director of Senior Services and Board Chair, with the advice of the board, as we decide on what we want to accomplish and how to move forward each year. The plan represents the end of the Committee's work and the beginning of the COA community's work. Susan said that, as a next step, the Committee recommends that the Board adopt at its November 17th Board meeting the new mission statement and tag line as written in the two documents.

John Schuler remarked that the COA is dealing with the fastest growing segment of Wellesley's population and that the plan will be a useful and effective tool for publicity, marketing, and education.

Shirley Quinn noted that the committee recommended only one hour as a conversation meeting by the board about the plan. That time seemed much too limited given the scope and importance of the planning document. Susan said she would take that comment under advisement.

The outline of the report is attached is on file at the WCOA.

Staff Reports

Members of the board appreciated the way in which the staff responded in their reports to the suggestion made at the last board meeting that these reports be somewhat refined without losing the essence of the work accomplished by the staff.

Director's Remarks

COA Lunch Program: The COA dining program is making the transition from meals provided by Springwell to arrangements made directly with the Linden Deli (Tuesdays)

and the La Riviera Café (Fridays). This is a pilot project in which the COA is partnering with the FWCOA. The current donation of \$1.75 per person per meal will be changed to a mandatory \$4 per person per meal. The meals actually cost \$8 (Linden) and \$8.50 (La Riviera) including delivery. The difference is being absorbed by the Friends.

Staffing: With the departure of Kait Gayle has been reviewing the staffing needs of the COA. Ideally she would like to have 2 new positions, one clerical and one administrative. After discussing the situation with Hans Larsen, Executive Director of Government Services, and the Town HR office, it was decided that due to time and financial constraints the current job description would apply and one person would be recruited. The situation now is urgent because of the general busyness of the office – a whole new staff and increase in programs and activities. The discussion centered on moving ahead with the plan for new staff in FY 16 budget

Donations: The Almira N. Simons Fund has donated \$15,000. This is an annual gift from a private trust and the gift this year is to be used “for people over the age of 60” in Wellesley. A \$600 donation has been made anonymously to be used for volunteers working on the newsletter. Volunteers who contributed at least 25 hours of volunteer service assembling the newsletter in FY 14 have each received a gift certificate to be used for COA programs.

Announcements

1. The Treasurer’s Report will be submitted later.
2. Stanley Hodges has expressed his appreciation of the new bus service, mentioning particularly Jill Dube and the drivers.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35.

Respectfully submitted

Shirley Quinn, secretary